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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES



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7 March 1974

BULGARIA

New Economic Agreements with North Vietnam

Bulgaria and North Vietnam signed several economic agreements during deputy premier Dakov's visit to Hanoi in late February. Bulgaria will assist Hanoi in developing a cooper industry, participate in exploiting North Vietnamese bauxite reserves, and cooperate in the fields of refrigeration, pharmaceuticals and agriculture. A trade and payments agreement for 1975 and an agreement on scientific and technical exchanges were also signed.

Dakov claimed in an interview that these new agreements have special significance. Economic cooperation he said, has now moved to a "new state" distinct from the previous "all round assistance." Presumably following Moscow's lead, Bulgaria cancelled all of Hanoi's war debts last August. Sofia refused, however, to make a specific commitment for future aid at that time, and there were indications that Bulgaria acted grudgingly and was experiencing its own economic difficulties. Dakov's reference to a new state of cooperation may, therefore, imply that Hanoi has now agreed to pay for what it gets.

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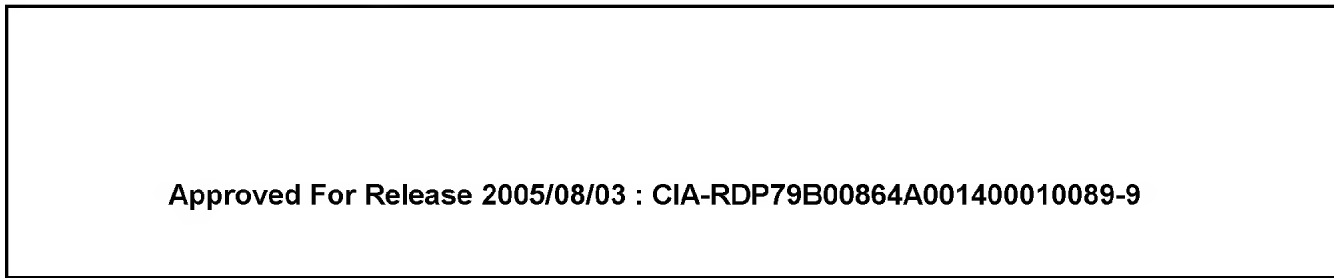
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HUNGARY

Tourism's Ideological Battlefield

Budapest welcomes the ideological battlefield that tourism opens up and believes the average Hungarian is well prepared for open debate, according to a recent Hungarian commentary. Westerners' visits to Hungary, the commentator asserts, can be used to disprove "outrageous cold-war lies" and to show off socialist Hungary's accomplishments. In any event, he

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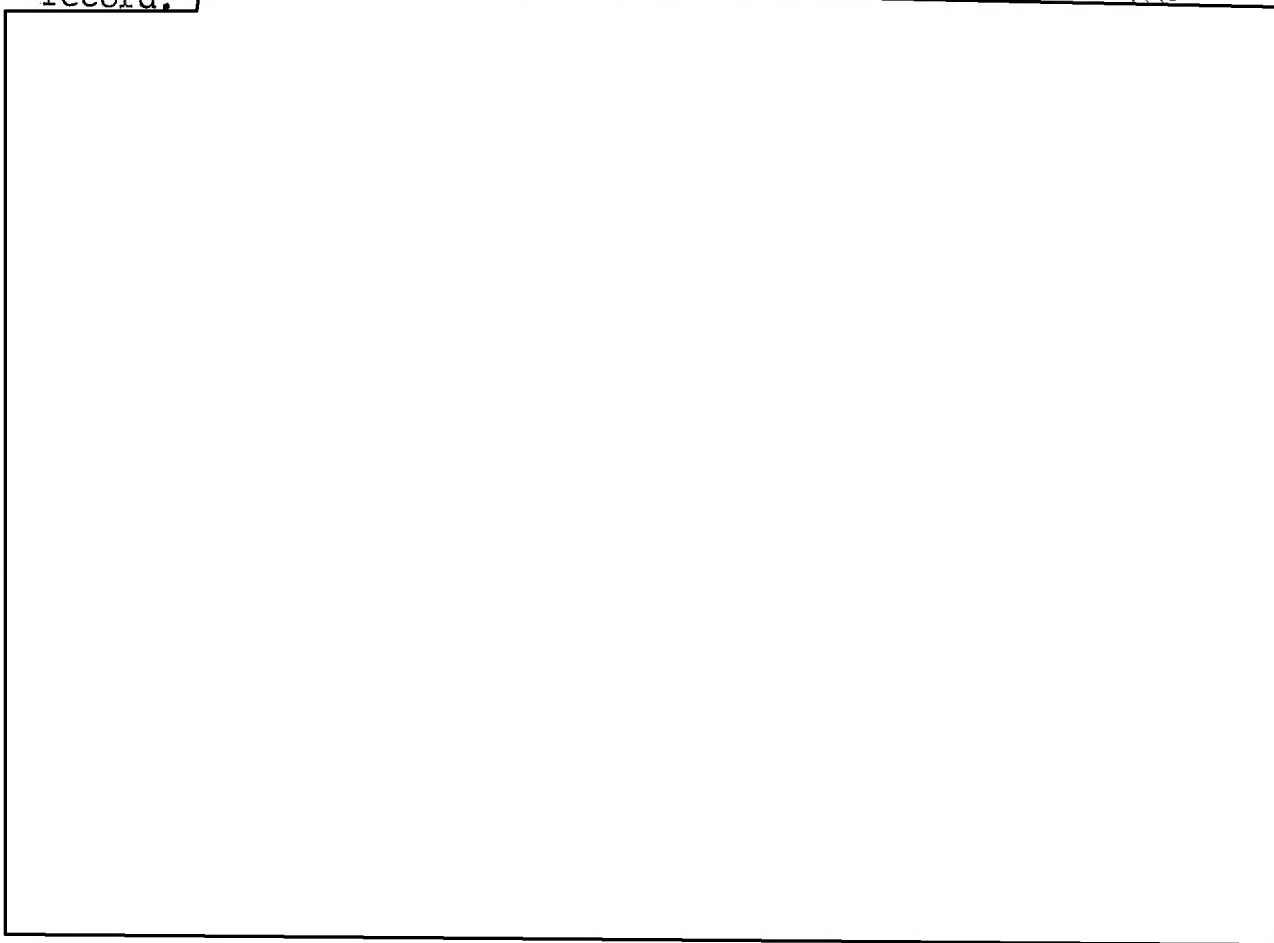
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concludes, it would be naive to try to isolate Western tourists and prevent a conflict of contrasting ideas.

This optimistic version of Brezhnev's "victory-through-contacts" dictum is ostensibly an answer to British press assertions that Hungary fears tourism. It moreover seems intended to reassure a wider Western audience that Hungary has not changed its liberal views on East-West interaction. Budapest has been touting a hard line on the "freer movement" issue and may now feel it is necessary to balance the record.

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EAST GERMANY

Formal Relations with Bonn Nearing

The representatives of East and West Germany--Deputy Foreign Minister Kurt Nier and State Secretary Guenter Gaus--made progress yesterday during five hours of negotiations in East Berlin on the establishment of permanent missions. They will meet again today. In addition, accords are almost completed relating to health, non-commercial payments, and post and telecommunications.

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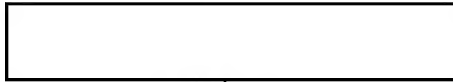
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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Writers' Meeting in Prague

Representatives of the writers' organizations of the Warsaw Pact countries plus Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam gathered in Prague on March 5 for their 11th meeting. Their purpose was to plan activities for the coming year. The meeting called for "new approaches and unceasing pressure against all anti-socialist and anti-democratic forces in the world." The

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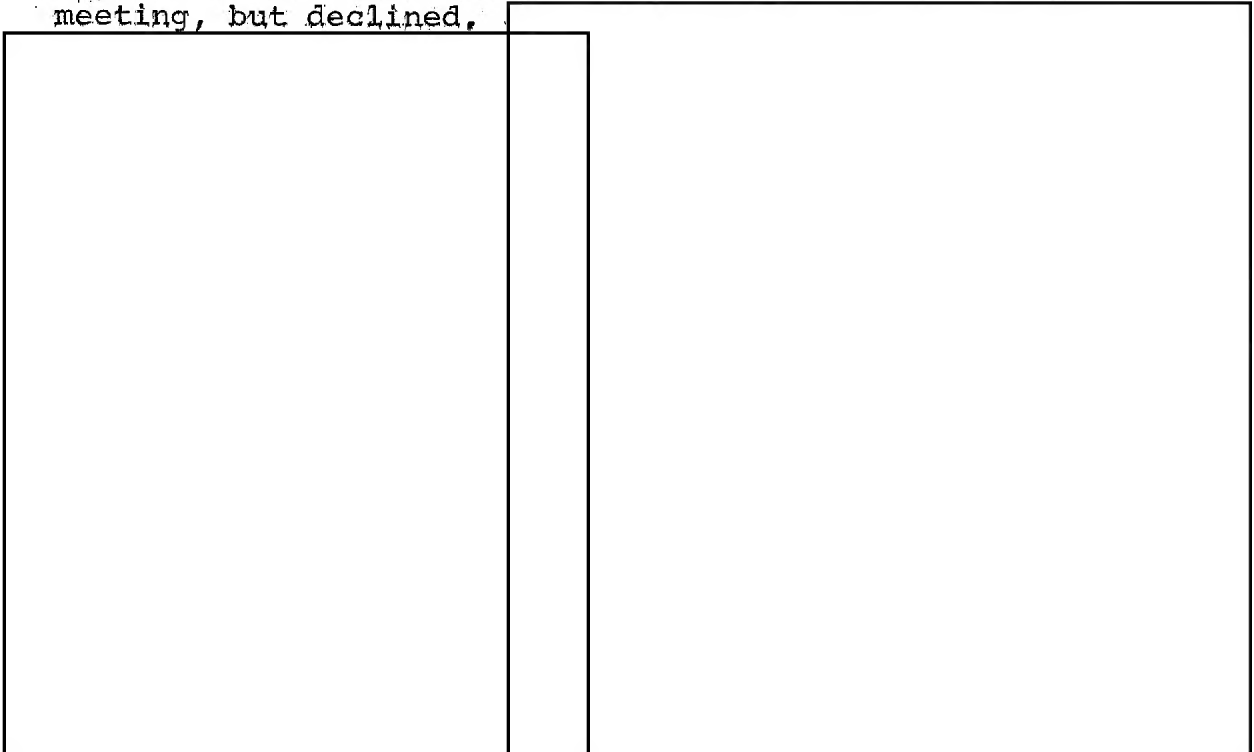


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Yugoslavs and North Koreans were invited to attend the meeting, but declined.

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